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SUBJECT:PROPOSAL FOR JOINT US-SOVIET CONFERENCE OF WRITERS,
CRITICS, AND PUBLISHERS

REF: MOSCOW 10946

1. WE AGREE THAT SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR JOINT CONFERENCE OF WRITERS, CRITICS AND PUBLISHERS HAS MERIT, AND WISH TO RESPOND IN POSITIVE MANNER. PROPOSED CONFERENCE WOULD MEET US NEEDS, AS WELL AS SOVIET, FOR FORUM WHERE CURRENT US AND SOVIET LITERARY AND PUBLISHING TRENDS MIGHT BE DISCUSSED, AND WE ANTICIPATE FAVORABLE RESPONSE ON PART OF US WRITERS, CRITICS AND PUBLISHERS. HOWEVER, BEFORE CONTACTING PRIVATE US ORGANIZATIONS, WHOSE SUPPORT FOR AND PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE WOULD BE ESSENTIAL TO ITS SUCCESS, WE OFFER FOLLOWING FOR EMBASSY'S CONSIDERATION.

2. IN FORMING US DELEGATION FOR CONFERENCE, DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT PRESUME TO SPEAK FOR US WRITERS, CRITICS

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AND PUBLISHERS, BUT WOULD SEEK ONE OR MORE PRIVATE US

ORGANIZATIONS WHICH WOULD SELECT DELEGATES, DETERMINE AGENDA IN CONSULTATION WITH SOVIET COUNTERPART ORGANIZATION, AND DECIDE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS. SUCH A PRIVATE DELEGATION WOULD OF COURSE REPRESENT VIEWS OF ITS MEMBERS

" THEIR ORGANIZATIONS, NOT USG. IN SUCH SITUATION, DELEGATE MEMBERS MAY WISH TO RAISE QUESTIONS OF CURRENT INTEREST TO THEM WHICH SOVIETS MIGHT CONSIDER PROVOCATIVE. THESE QUESTIONS MIGHT INCLUDE RIGHT TO PUBLISH, GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP, SUPPRESSION OF DISSIDENT WRITERS, AND RIGHT TO TRAVEL ABROAD AND EMIGRATE. PUBLISHERS REPRESENTATIVES MAY ALSO WISH TO RAISE QUESTIONS RELATING TO COPYRIGHTS AND SALE OF THEIR BOOKS IN USSR.

3. WE ALSO HAVE SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS. HOW MANY US DELEGATES WOULD SOVIETS BE PREPARED TO RECEIVE, AND HOW LONG WOULD CONFERENCE LAST? WOULD THERE ALSO BE POST-CONFERENCE TRAVEL IN USSR? WHO WOULD BE SPONSORING ORGANIZATION ON SOVIET SIDE? WOULD SOVIETS DESIRE FOLLOW-UP CONFERENCE IN US ON RECIPROCAL BASIS, WITH RECEIVING SIDE PAYING COSTS FOR SOVDEL? WE WOULD, OF COURSE, RESERVE FOR US SIDE THE RIGHT TO SELECT ITS OWN CHAIRMAN, AND TRUST THAT SOVIETS, BY INDICATING PREFERENCE FOR A PARTICULAR US CHAIRMAN, WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE OUR CHOICE. IF FORMER UN AMBASSADOR N. FEDERENKO SHOULD INDEED BE SOVIET CHAIRMAN, WE WOULD WISH TO HAVE COMPARABLE FIGURE AS US CHAIRMAN.

4. IN SUMMARY, WE BELIEVE PROPOSED CONFERENCE WOULD PROVIDE USEFUL FORUM FOR DISCUSSION OF US AND SOVIET LITERATURE, AS WELL AS OTHER QUESTIONS OF CONCERN TO WRITERS, CRITICS AND PUBLISHERS. BEFORE DISCUSSING PROPOSAL WITH POTENTIAL US PARTICIPANTS, WE REQUEST REPLIES TO QUESTIONS RAISED PARA 3 ABOVE, AND EMBASSY'S VIEWS AS TO WHETHER SOVIETS WOULD WISH TO PARTICIPATE UNDER CONDITIONS DESCRIBED PARA 2. KISSINGER

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